FROM: P. O. Box 9007
Berkeley, CA 94709 USA

First Class

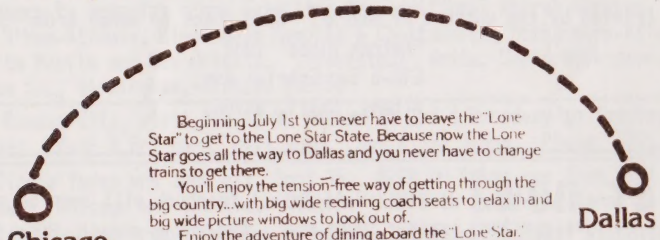
To:

mp

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID 10¢
PERMIT 1083
BERKELEY, CAL.

Introducing the Lone Star all the way to Dallas.

Now you don't have to change trains to get to Dallas.



Beginning July 1st you never have to leave the "Lone Star" to get to the Lone Star State. Because now the Lone Star goes all the way to Dallas and you never have to change trains to get there.

You'll enjoy the tension-free way of getting through the big country...with big wide reclining coach seats to relax in and big wide picture windows to look out of.

Enjoy the adventure of dining aboard the "Lone Star." There's an elegant restaurant aboard with very unelegant prices. And there's complete beverage service, too.

Lounge around the lounge car and discover the joy that train travel can be. At night we'll make you comfy with blankets and pillows on request in coach.

The "Lone Star" leaves for Dallas via Kansas City, Oklahoma City, Fort Worth and other points south every day at 5:00 PM and arrives in Dallas the next day at 2:35 PM.

Coach fare all the way to Dallas is only $50 one way and a roomette with all the comforts of home will cost you a mere $88.50 one way.

For more information or reservations call Amtrak at 786-1333. Or your travel agent.

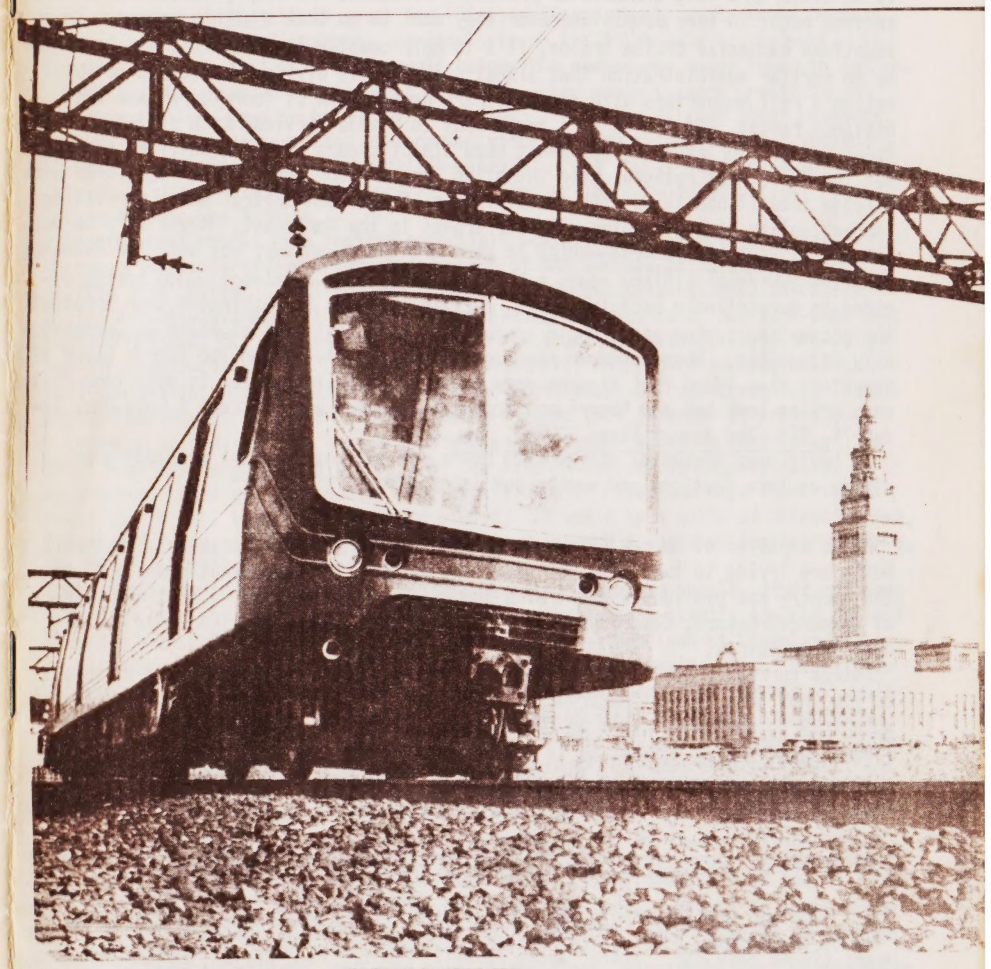
Amtrak

Union Station
210 South Canal St.

35¢

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

VOL. 5 NO. 15
FIRST ISSUE OF
AUGUST 1975
Issue #113



FROM: P. O. Box 9007
Berkeley, CA 94709 USA

First Class

To:

mp

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID 10¢
PERMIT 1083
BERKELEY, CAL.

Introducing the Lone Star all the way to Dallas.

Now you don't have to change trains to get to Dallas.

Chicago — Dallas

Beginning July 1st you never have to leave the "Lone Star" to get to the Lone Star State. Because now the Lone Star goes all the way to Dallas and you never have to change trains to get there.

You'll enjoy the tension-free way of getting through the big country...with big wide reclining coach seats to relax in and big wide picture windows to look out of.

Enjoy the adventure of dining aboard the "Lone Star." There's an elegant restaurant aboard with very unelegant prices. And there's complete beverage service, too.

Lounge around the lounge car and discover the joy that train travel can be. At night we'll make you comfy with blankets and pillows on request in coach.

The "Lone Star" leaves for Dallas via Kansas City, Oklahoma City, Fort Worth and other points south every day at 5:00 PM and arrives in Dallas the next day at 2:35 PM.

Coach fare all the way to Dallas is only $50 one way and a roomette with all the comforts of home will cost you a mere $88.50 one way.

For more information or reservations call Amtrak at 786-1333. Or your travel agent.

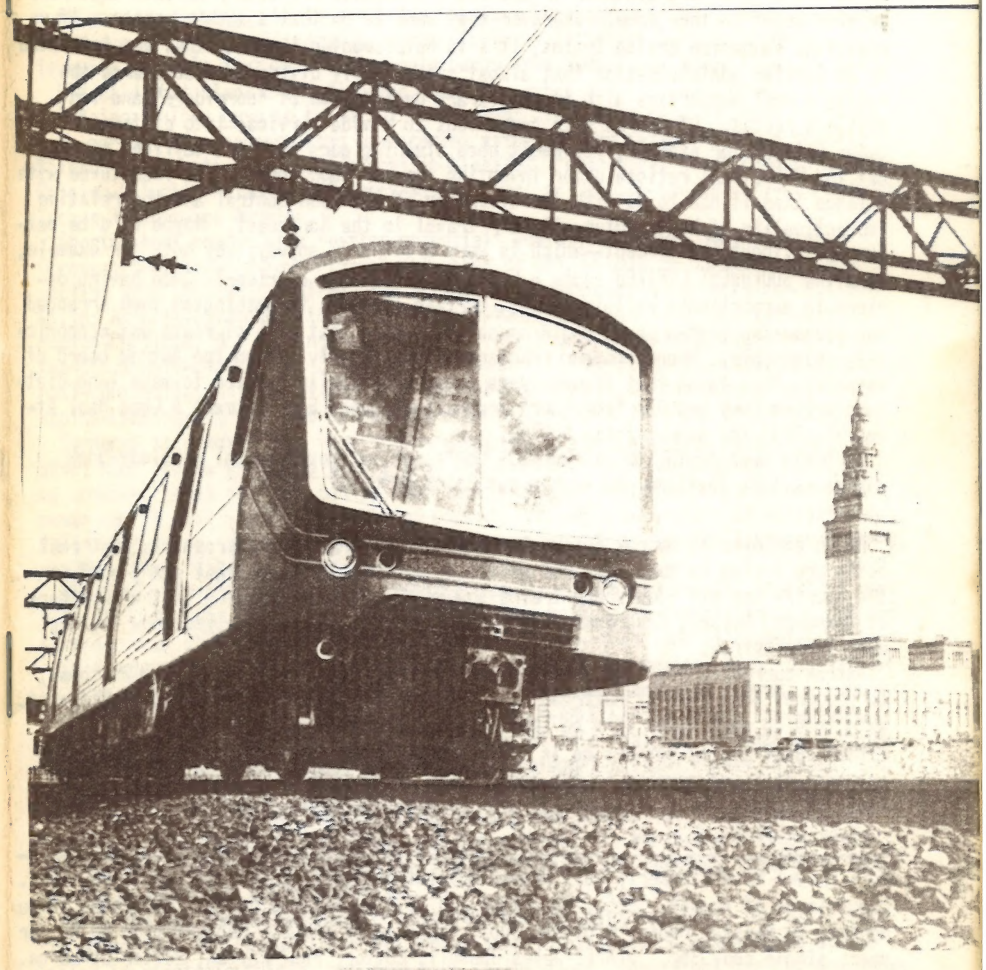
Amtrak

Union Station
210 South Canal St.

35¢

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

VOL. 5 NO. 15
FIRST ISSUE OF
AUGUST 1975
Issue #113



LETTERS

I'm concerned at your pro-cruise train posture, especially when it leads anyone to neglect the short haul business. This short haul must be properly marketed and emphasized; it's where the majority of the customers are, it's where the service heritage is worst, and it's where the passenger train has its only (current) chance of paying its way by most any set of accounting rules. If corridor services do well and stop offending riders by the thousands with slow-late trains, poor equipment, etc., an even bigger market for cruise trains will be built. It's going to be "one man-one vote"--it's not passenger-miles but passengers in number of impressions that will make or break the continued public support for Amtrak.

William Crawford

Nahant, Massachusetts

(Ed. note: It's time we editorialized a little on this topic. RTN's policy is not to be either pro-long distance or pro-short distance. We simply believe that rail service ought to take people wherever they want to go that's within reason. If we sometimes emphasize cruise trains, it's to help counter the bias that was initiated by an earlier administration that almost successfully divided and conquered the nation's rail supporters with its arbitrary designation of "corridors" and long distance routes. Of course it's convenient to divide services into different types (since, for example, you don't need sleeping cars on short daylight runs), but the DOT's real rationale for inventing the corridor concept had less to do with mileage than it had to do with the situation of the Penn Central and the relative impracticality of heavy inter-city air travel in the Northeast. Maybe we'd be better off without the concept--which is very arbitrary, anyway; why not, for example, term the SOUTHWEST LIMITED route a Los Angeles-Chicago corridor? Once having decided to support only certain routes, certain elements in Washington then arranged the accounting system so it would appear that only that type of route was economically defensible. When consumer representatives finally got on the Amtrak board of directors they found that figures were being arbitrarily juggled to make long distance trains look bad and "corridor" trains look good (See "Amtrak: A Long Haul Affair?", RTN, 2nd August Issue, 1974).

We badly need trains of all sorts. Let's not let governmental gobbledy-gook divide us into factions and weaken our joint effort.)

As an employee of Amtrak I take issue with some crazy route proposals that rail buffs are trying to turn into hot political issues. It seems that every buff in the country has his idea where trains should run, gets together a list of Chambers of Commerce, Mayors, Congressmen and news media ... and, before you know it, the heat is on Amtrak.

Amtrak currently has 45 route proposals before it. If we started all of these, do you know what kind of railroad we would be? My guess is that we wouldn't exist. We'd lose so much money we'd be legislated right out of business.

What specifically bothers me is the Blanton-Monaghan Atlanta-Dallas-Los Angeles proposal that you covered in the Second July issue of RTN. They have gotten all kinds of people who are unfamiliar with railroad operation, with the Amtrak law, and with sound marketing, to push for this boondoggle train.

Operation of the Atlanta-Los Angeles train would entail (1) establishing support facilities in Atlanta for which we have no funds; (2) operation over bad track in northern Louisiana; (3) opening and staffing numerous stations in rural areas where ticket revenues would not even meet station labor costs; (4) retaining some of the junk cars that we must scrap soon; and (5) operating a nearly empty train because these are not prime rail markets, particularly on the Atlanta-Dallas segment. It is quite possible that this train would become the number one money loser in Amtrak.

RTN said that Blanton and Monaghan think "No other route is more practical or promising." They have to be out of their minds if they're talking about revenues as a percent of expenses: Long haul routes with far more potential would include Chicago-Cincinnati-Atlanta-Jacksonville-Miami/St. Petersburg; New York-Washington-Raleigh-Columbia-Atlanta-Montgomery-New Orleans; or Chicago-Kansas City-El Paso-Tucson-Phoenix-Los Angeles.

Shorter haul routes with "better potential" would include Ft. Worth-Dallas-Shreveport-Alexandria-New Orleans; extension of SAN JOAQUIN to Barstow and connecting with SOUTHWEST LIMITED; New Orleans-Mobile-Pensacola-Tallahassee-Jacksonville; Atlanta-Savannah; Tidewater-Richmond-Washington-New York; New York-Cape Cod; Boston-Portland, ME; Washington-Pittsburgh; Pittsburgh-Cleveland; Cleveland-Columbus-Cincinnati-Louisville; Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit; Detroit-Toledo-Dayton-Cincinnati-Louisville; Chicago-Cincinnati; Chicago-Louisville; Chicago-Green Bay; Grand Rapids-Lansing-Detroit; and Chicago-Lansing-Toronto (not in order of priority).

Compared to running long haul trains where the primary vacation markets are, or short haul trains where the people are, the Atlanta-Dallas-Los Angeles train, in my opinion, comes out very badly. Our tactful public relations department would never say it, but I will: it's damned stupid. It would be a waste of Amtrak's time, talent and money, all of which are in short supply, and a waste of taxpayers' money, another thing that is in short supply.

Why can't Blanton and Monaghan, who are usually reasonable people, start off more modestly? And why create all this pressure when we haven't exactly ignored Dallas? (Compare what Dallas had in 1971 and what it has now--then look at Cleveland.)

Of course, if I lived in Dallas I would be fighting for trains, too. But I'd do it in a way that would more likely strike a responsive chord with Amtrak. I would campaign for (1) improved scheduling of the INTER-AMERICAN to insure connections with the Mexican train, and for thru operation of this train to Chicago on a daily basis; (2) inauguration of Ft. Worth-Dallas-Shreveport-Alexandria-New Orleans; (3) Dallas-Houston corridor service; and (4) restoration of the GULF WIND since it would open up circle tour possibilities (e.g., Four Winds), military travel, and excellent connections to the SUNSET and the mythical Ft. Worth-New Orleans train. All of these factors would strengthen trains in Texas and possibly contribute to the daily operation of the SUNSET.

Once the key connections are in place for our existing services, the facilities in operation, additional labor and supervision in place, more spare parts stockpiled in strategic points, and more cars in the fleet, then fight for the expensive long-haul run.

ON THE COVER:

(Front Cover) The Dept. of Transportation released this photo of its State-of-the-Art car (SOAC) on July 17, on the occasion of its announcement that the advanced transit vehicle would soon go into service on Philadelphia's high-speed Lindenwold Line (see last issue).

(Rear Cover) On the occasion of its inauguration of direct service between Chicago and Dallas, utilizing cars cut off from the Chicago-Houston LONE STAR at Fort Worth, Amtrak ran this ad in Chicago newspapers (see First July Issue).

Rail Travel News (formerly Rail Travel Newsletter), Vol. 5, No. 15 (Whole No. 113). First Issue of August, 1975. Copyright © 1975 by Message Media. Published twice monthly by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Subscription $8.00 per year; single copy 35¢. STAFF: James Russell, Editor; Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large. Regional Correspondents: Peter Putnam Bretz, Malibu; Jack Ferry, Chicago; Kenneth Maylath, Baltimore; Peter Roehm, Boston. Mailing date this issue: August 15, 1975.

If this letter hasn't impressed you so far, then I am a failure in relating to you the importance of coming up with reasonable proposals. Keep in mind that the last thing most Amtrak managers want to do is start another long-haul route (even one with greater marketing potential than the Atlanta-Dallas-Los Angeles route) when we can not yet run properly what we have today. Have rail buffs forgotten that the average age of our cars is 24 years? Where in the hell do we get the equipment? Should Paul Reistrup call a railroad museum and say, "Excuse me, I'd like to lease six sets of equipment. What do you have available today? What? You have no dome cars? But I think Burt Blanton wants dome cars? Diners? No diners?"

And, has it ever occurred to some rail buffs that we are quite busy with projects of greater priority. Yes, I said greater priority. I was fortunate enough to sit in on a staff meeting recently and I learned what Amtrak is facing right now, today.

By mid-1976 Amtrak should be taking over the Northeast Corridor and all of the problems that entails. We will be phasing in the new cars which requires extensive training of mechanical, operating and service employees. We're in the process of constructing stations in Richmond, St. Louis, Worcester and Cleveland. We're attempting to reactivate Cincinnati Union Terminal. We're fixing up track on the Boston-New York, Chicago-Detroit and Temple-Taylor lines. We're groping for a solution to fund track improvements on the Pittsburgh-Chicago and Pittsburgh-St. Louis routes. We're conducting an exhaustive review of the USRA plan for ConRail to determine how it will affect Amtrak. We are in negotiations with the Rock Island to take over their two intercity trains in conjunction with Illinois. We're negotiating with the Canadian National to operate a Chicago-Toronto train that will be partially subsidized by Michigan. We're having private meetings with railroads to improve on-time performance. We're in contract negotiations with the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks. We're trying to plan a Washington-Denver train and a Boston-Cleveland-Chicago train, both of which present horrendous problems. We're trying to expand the locations at which we have our own maintenance forces. We're fighting the construction of the Visitors Center which will wipe out Washington Union Terminal as a viable train station. We're trying to resolve standee problems on the Detroit line. We're pulling out all the stops to keep air conditioning working but the old cars don't want attention from the doctor anymore; they want to die. We're in the process of reorganizing so that the man on the ground has responsibility and authority to fix a problem on-the-spot. We're making further improvements to our computerized reservations system. We're conducting numerous fare experiments. We're undertaking a totally new advertising campaign. We're modernizing the newly-purchased Beech Grove shop. We're proceeding with further design work on the high-level cars. We're still ironing out problems with the four trains that we've started in 1975 (ARROWHEAD, MICHIGAN EXECUTIVE, MOUNTAINEER, and Dallas leg of the LONE STAR). Meanwhile, the command changed in the president's office and is changing in most of the vice-presidents' offices.

That's today's problems. That is not a list of our accomplishments since January 1 of this year (e.g., Turboliners, Chicago-Detroit; new Chicago lounge, etc.).

All of this is underway at a time when the cost of fuel, labor and materials is skyrocketing while revenues are down because of the recession. The bus companies, some congressmen and many newspapers are decrying the Amtrak deficit. L'Enfant Plaza is a pressure cooker, and most people are doing their best.

In the middle of this, Blanton and Monaghan want a big-deficii, car-gobbling Atlanta-Dallas-Los Angeles train! I'm flabbergasted! Burt and Dan, are you for us or against us? Do you really think your train is more "practical" and more "promising" than Cleveland-Cincinnati, or Ft. Worth-New Orleans, or Dallas-Houston? Do you? Why not get out those lists of congressmen and newspapers and retrack your plan? Why not modify it to a train to New Orleans?

As an employee, I'm proud of what we've done in our four years. Sure, we have our shortcomings, and that's exactly why I want to see the help and interest continue from rail buffs. We need all the friends we can get. But remember: friends make reasonable requests. Please!

Anonymous Amtrak Employee

Washington, D.C.

(Ed. note: In his July 1 memorandum, on which last issue's article was based, Dr. Monaghan said "This proposal for the present is recognized as long range planning, but ... such planning can not be started too soon. ... On a projected route as viable as this one there will be immediate need and utilization not to mention the not too distant day when better public transportation will become mandatory as energy supplies are depleted...")

The tempest in a teapot relating to the restoration of the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR is uncalled for and inappropriate. What passenger proponents don't need is a lot of in-fighting and division of our ranks...

The most remunerative long-haul train in the Amtrak fleet is now the SUNSET LIMITED. It serves an area that has shown a growth rate of 87%. Projections indicate that long-haul trains can be made profitable, whereas it is doubtful that the corridor and short-hauls will ever be. This is due to high terminal cost and short line-haul in the East versus the opposite in the West, which is no different from the economics of freight hauling. Up to now there have been more nonsensical routes added in the East which show marginal potential than there have in the West.

It is suggested that Amtrak enthusiasts promote the cause in general when and wherever possible and that they work diligently with practical proposals in their respective areas without polarizing various sections of the country with undue criticism.

M. D. Monaghan

Garland, Texas

I got a rueful chortle out of J. H. Price's experience aboard train 4 at Pasadena, where the summer-replacement porters opened up the sleeping cars on the wrong side (LETTERS, last issue). The story hit home personally because Amtrak has flatly refused to hire me (and other knowledgeable rail enthusiasts who were similarly situated) for summer jobs such as these despite the fact that we obviously know our way around the country by train and could be counted upon to be highly motivated about our work. The reason? We were never told face to face by Amtrak personnel men, but the story later leaked out that Amtrak's hiring policy is never to hire anyone with a rail enthusiast background. What possible justification could there be for this? Summer-replacement employees who could convey to their fellow travelers a noticeable enthusiasm for rail travel would be a definite asset to Amtrak, especially when compared to the current corps of redcoated timeservers and clock-watchers. Is leaning out the vestibule door to take an occasional picture such an unforgiveable transgression as to justify Amtrak's reluctance to employ anyone who expresses an affinity for railroad photography? Or is Amtrak afraid that railfan employees will tell passengers that Santa Fe or Great Northern ran better trains than Amtrak? Amtrak may try to hide this truth by hiring people who know no better, but the cover-up wears mighty thin when the wrong side of the car is opened up at Pasadena.

Mike Blaszak

Glenview, Illinois

AMTRAK GETS NEW BOARD CHAIRMAN

Replacing Roger Lewis as Chairman of Amtrak's Board of Directors is Donald P. Jacobs, dean of the graduate school of management and Marsden professor of finance at Northwestern University, Evanston, IL. Dr. Jacobs was voted in July 31, as Roger Lewis indicated his desire not to serve further as chairman; he willremain as a board member. Jacobs was vice-chairman before; he came to the board by appointment when it was recently enlarged under congressional mandate. Replacing him as vice-chairman is Mary J. Head, one of the three consumer representatives on Amtrak's board. Jacobs is currently serving a 3-year term on the board.

STARTUP OF BOSTON-CHICAGO SERVICE SET

Amtrak announced that the new Chicago-Boston experimental route will begin revenue service in each direction on Oct. 31. The trip will be zpproximately 25 hrs in length, but the exact schedule has not yet been announced. On Oct. 29 a specizl press train will run eastward from Chicago, making stops at regular stations, with an overnight layover in Buffalo.

Amtrak also said that the beginning of Washington-Denver service is being set for May 1, 1976, to coincide with Amtrak's fifth anniversary.

Amtrak's fall schedules will appear in two phases: Sept 14 and Oct 26. There will be a large number of changes upcoming, Amtrak said, tho these have not yet been formally announced. One change known is that the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR will have its westbound schedule altered to depart Chicago later, making a connection with the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR once again possible. Amtrak president Paul Reistrup said in a July 29 letter to an RTN reader that he was seeking a 3:30pm departure. Later information suggests that the departure may be later than that, possibly 4pm.

AMTRAK TAKES DELIVERY OF GE DIESELS

Amtrak received the first two General Electric P30 diesels with head-end power on Aug 8. They will be tested for 3 weeks by the DOT before final acceptance. Many remors have been circulating about the GE electrics (P60's). Amtrak said that two of them, #950 and 965, have been completed with modifications. These are also to undergo DOT tests before acceptance. If tests prove okay, the remainder of the 26 locos ordered will be fitted with the modifications and all can be ready for delivery within 45 days.

AMTRAK ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENTS AND TRACK IMPROVEMENTS

Amtrak's regional reorganization plan continues to progress. On Aug 4, David A. Watts, VP and Gen'l Mgr of the new Line Operations Dept, announced the appointment of 18 managers in Washington headquarters and 56 managers in the 4 regional offices. The Western Regional Office will move from Los Angeles to San Francisco on Oct. 1.

Don R. Brazier was appointed VP for Finance and Treasurer of Amtrak on Aug 5. Brazier succeeds Robert C. Moot, who has retired. He has been Treasurer since March 1974.

The corporation announced Aug 1 approval of an $1.8 million track improvement program between Tample and Taylor, TX to speed up the INTER-AMERICAN. The train will szve 40 miles by using a direct route between the cities, and cut the schedule down by about an hour. It involves building a connection between the KATY and Santa Fe at Temple, letting the trains make a junction point there; and rehabilitation of 39 miles of Katy trackage to allow 70mph operation. The new schedule is expected to begin in late fall.

On Aug 4 Amtrak announced approval of a cooperative effort with Michigan to improve track and signal conditions on Chicago-Detroit route. The program will cost $457,000 and will be funded two-thirds by the state.

Amtrak's board of directors announced Aug 1 approval of an allocation of $1.4 million to build or improve stations at 10 cities along the new Boston-Chicago run.

The Readers Comment on Short-Haul Trains

The fourth and final installment of excerpts from our first reader train rating survey

SAN JOAQUIN: "Train should travel SP Oakland-Los Angeles using Tehachapi Loop." (Reader, Canoga Park, CA).

"Multi-company, creative routing here; why not eliminate crossover padding and extend the concept to Modesto & Visalia? Forget the marginal L.A. bus and orient it to the Bay: morning in, evening out. Needs more coaches." (Edward Osburn, L.A., CA).

"This train should have a separate diner and a lounge/parlor. Trip could be done in less time." (Richard Spotswood, San Francisco, CA).

"These ratings would have not been nearly so high in Aug '74 on account of the poor equipment then running. There are no Amtrak men or women on board. The only crew personnel are railroad people who are not responsible for assisting passengers. For a train with such a short route, the SAN JOAQUIN has an excellent food selection. For such good track on flat ground, the schedule is pitifully slow." (Amtrak employee.)

"It suffers a lack of fast-serving food facilities. Once every counter seat is occupied, there is a l-o-n-g delay to get served. One end of the car should contain some automat equipment so the person in a hurry can grab a sandwich, beverage and dessert without having to wait... Another complaint: meal service is provided for only about 2 hours along the way. The rest of the time you can obtain only soft drinks, etc. Too often it carries ex-SP coaches with broken-down seats, monfunctioning air conditioning, etc. 'No-smoking' signs should be clearly marked in each car. Why must they continue to use hand switches at Port Chicago where the train switches between SP & Santa Fe? This just seems to take forever. Surely automatic switches could be installed." (Reader, Pico Rivera, CA).

"I'm totally enthused about the train's on-board service. It's the best I've consistently seen from Amtrak. Foremost problem is that the train should continue over the Tehachapis to L.A. The bus connection is just not appealing. Another suggestion: operate via the SP Stockton to Bakersfield... The SP is altogether a more central route (but Stockton must be served at all costs). There should be some sort of service Sacramento-Stockton, hopefully a corridor route before long. Long waits for tickets are often the rule at Oakland. In December the Martinez baggage agent was simply refusing to check baggage. In the same month, the Merced station was locked upon arrival of the Yosemite bus; several passengers left for greyhound. When the ticket agent returned, he was terribly surly. Loadings could be increased if the service was advertised at all extensively. Great food--good, informal service--the lunch counter diner very appropriate--on-board service excellent. Make the facts known! Also the true dependability of this service as far as timekeeping is concerned!" (Roger Hooson, Santa Cruz, CA).

SAN DIEGANS: "I have ridden the trains 47 times in the past 5 years and have recorded over 75 consists since May 1, 1971. The one boost Amtrak has given the SAN DIEGAN is that it now runs on time practically 95% of the time; under Santa Fe it was often late. This route is one of the most scenic and it is also well-served city-wise. It has a lot to offer such as transportation for teenagers to the beach from L.A., Fullerton, and Santa Ana to San Clemente it stops right on the beach. A fourth train is needed in each direction during Easter season, summer season, and on weekends. A full lounge car must be offered, possibly two in the summer because of extremely heavy business." (Bill Brooks, Whittier, CA).

"They don't wash the windows often enough. This train follows the ocean for many miles, but you feel like you're ina fog. Conductors are out to make things easy for themselves instead of the passengers." (Reader, Pico Rivera, CA).

"Overall, a good and dependable corridor service. The snack bar menu should be printed, not hand-scrawled. The lounge car attendant should be a little less blasé." (Roger Hooson, Santa Cruz, CA).

"Santa Fe crews rate 9, Amtrak personnel rate 1. With a small crowd the food service is great, but the gentlemen are totally understaffed during peak seasons (long lines, only one attendant). For a route with this potential, the promotion is a joke." (Amtrak employee).

BLACK HAWK: "Train has comfortable equipment, a schedule allowing a full day in Chicago, one of the best crews Amtrak has, and serves a good population. What it doesn't have is very good ridership, which can be directly attributed to high fares and a total lack of advertising and promotion. The Chicago-Freeport fare, for example, has gone from $5.75 to $7, and there are no family, group, or 10-ride discounts. Amtrak has not done one bit of advertising since the train's first week of operation. There is no train information posted at Elmhurst, Freeport, Warren, or Galena, and Amtrak has not listed its toll-free number in the phone books for these stations." (Scott Rogers, Freeport, IL).

"Promotion of train is nil. Most people I talk to do not know of its existence. Increased public awareness would add many riders..." (Bob Breed, Elizabeth, IL).

"RDC cars modernized very nicely; snack bar was very 'make-shift', tho. Far superior to bus I rode pr3vious day to Freeport." (Harry Patterson, Mercer Island, WA)

MOUNT RAINIER & PUGET SOUND: "The dome observation lounges on these trains, while used mainly on weekends, are superior to the lounge facilities on many long distance trains. While they've seen better days, it is amazing what a little paint and soft lights can do. There always seems to be a passenger aboard who demonstrates his style on the piano carried aboard each car. One detriment is the heavily scored dome windows that Glenn Lee complains about so. Loadings will never improve with the trains' slow schedules." (Paul Kassen, Seattle, WA).

"I have ridden the trains 9 times the past 6 months. Service is constantly good." (Harry Patterson, Mercer Island, WA.)

"The PUGET SOUND left and arrived on time. I had breakfast in car 8400 just before Tacoma--one of the best meals I have ever eaten. The crew were very nice to all the passengers." (Randall Wallenberg, Seattle, WA).

PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL: "Crew quite sloppy and surly. Route quite scenic. Vancouver departure time too early." (Stephen E. Morse, Marshall, MN).

"Arrived Vancouver 10 mins early. Good trip. Amtrak gets high marks for the whole journey Denver-Vancouver." (R. W. Horton, Denver, CO).

Hiawatha Service: "Basically a commuter train. Very functional." (Paul F. Frantz, Milwaukee, WI).

"There seems to be more traffic potential on the C&NW." (Barry M. Steinberg, Quincy, MA).

"Observation-parlor car a real treat (dome car had lexan in front). Should be C&NW Milwaukee-Portage via Madison." (Peter Bretz, Malibu, CA).

SAINT CLAIR & WOLVERINE (before introduction of Turboliner service): "All too often, long distance coaches are on these trains, cutting needed capacity." (Tom Lindholm, Grand Rapids, MI).

"Round end coach observation on train. Maximum speed was 70. Arrived Chicago 15 mins early." (R. L. Skinner, Jr., Troy, MI).

"Why can't all routes be this well promoted?" (Duane W. Roller, Waterloo, Ont.).

"Microwave hot meal service was available, but since it was not posted or announced by the server, I believe I was forced to order a sandwich and missed what I later found to be a good meal." (Stephen Linde, Roslyn Heights, NY).

PIEDMONT (Southern Railway): "Snack car seating area very rough riding and inadequate; service very slow and awkward." (Adron F. Hall, Alexandria, VA).

"There appears to be little SR interest in continuing this train, despite 45-55% occupancy. Equipment was poor, some cars overheating, others badly in need of servicing." (Reader, Alexandria, VA).

Empire Service: "The Rochester station is in a horrendous state of disrepair. It's dark, smelly, and most of the windows are broken." (Tom Lindholm, Grand Rapids, MI).

"There should be a diner on an 8½-hour trip; only snack cars are offered. Short-cut thru downtown Schenectady needed--would lop 15 mins off schedule; it may be coming, under Rail Bond Issue of 1974. Non-existent promotion; only gasoline crisis of 1973-4, and Rail Bond Issue campaign of 1974, brought Amtrak service to people's attention." (Christopher Wasiutynski, New York, NY).

"NY-Albany portion of run is scenic, well-patronized and relatively fast (for a train, that is). Beyond Albany, the schedule is burdened with slow orders and is of less value to the business traveler. " (Eugene H. Blabey, Camillus, NY).

"Trains along this route have had pleasant crews and they have made the trips enjoyable. On several occasions a conductor gave a talk about the historic sights along the right-of-way in the Mohawk Valley. Cars have been clean and comfortable. Most all passengers seemed to be happy with their trips." (Raymond R. Hawkes, Cape Elizabeth, ME).

BLUE WATER: "Minimal snack bar for an 8-hour trip. How about a parlor car? Needs a second train on the route." (Duane W. Roller, Waterloo, Ontario).

"Inconvenient connections with CN. It seemed I was the only one hardy enough to try to take the CN 'connection'." (Barry M. Steinberg, Quincy, MA).

MERCHANTS LIMITED: "Crew generally helpful--more than once the crew took care of passengers for Old Saybrook (not a scheduled stop for 178) who had missed earlier trains because of late connections at New York. I'd like to see an observation on the train--wouldn't everybody?" (Al Crossley, Groton, CT).

"Train too early out of Boston for businessman. NH train crew very nice, as usual. Hell Gate line very rough, worst track I've ridden on Amtrak." (Philip J. Mulligan, Philadelphia, PA).

"No food service at all except to parlor car passengers." (Philip Klopp, Elkins Park, PA).

Here's one comment we must add that cannot be identified by route or writer: "The conductor on this run allowed several passengers (including me) to ride in the engine for awhile! You may or may not want to publish this, as it may spoil a good thing."

REMEMBER OUR SECOND TRAIN RATING SURVEY. Details were given in the First July issue. We'll remind readers of it from time to time. It will cover mid-June to mid-December travel, and results will be published in these pages at the end of this year. So while you're riding trains in the U.S. and Canada this summer and fall, keep your experiences in mind, as well as your impressions of the service. Send them to us before mid-December, and we'll tally and publish them as we did before. Again, our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in our survey.

FREEDOM TRAIN UPDATE: Steam engine 4449 took over the hauling of the Freedom Train on Aug. 4 in Chicago, a report says. The ex-SP engine replaced the Reading 2101 engine in Chicago's Proviso Yards to haul the train to Crystal Lake, IL. Another report says that poor track on the CNW on Aug 7 forced the engine to take the ICG line to Rockford, IL, while the Freedom Train was hauled by a diesel on the CNW to that city.

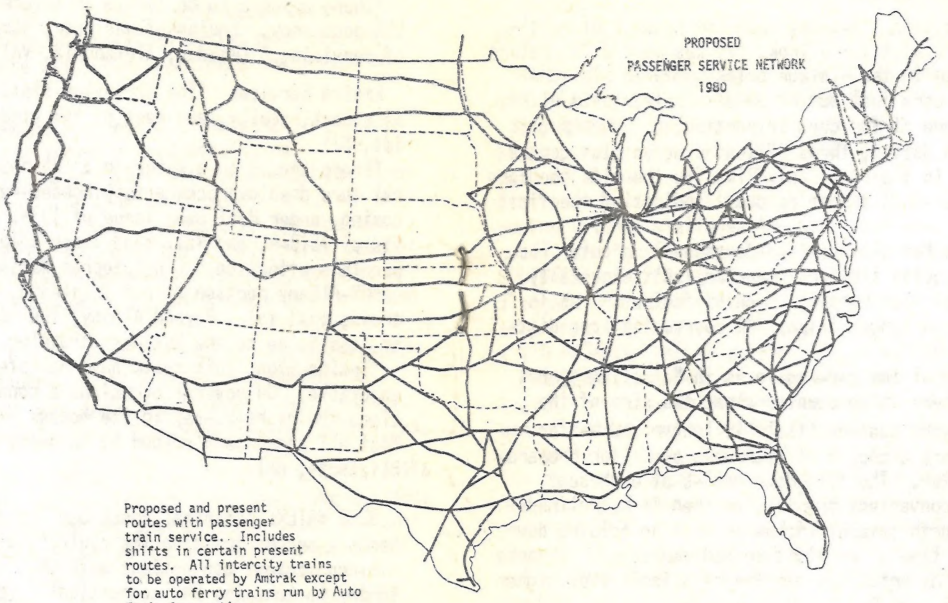
A Rail Plan for 1980

How will the Amtrak system grow in the next five years--haphazardly, or according to some rational plan?

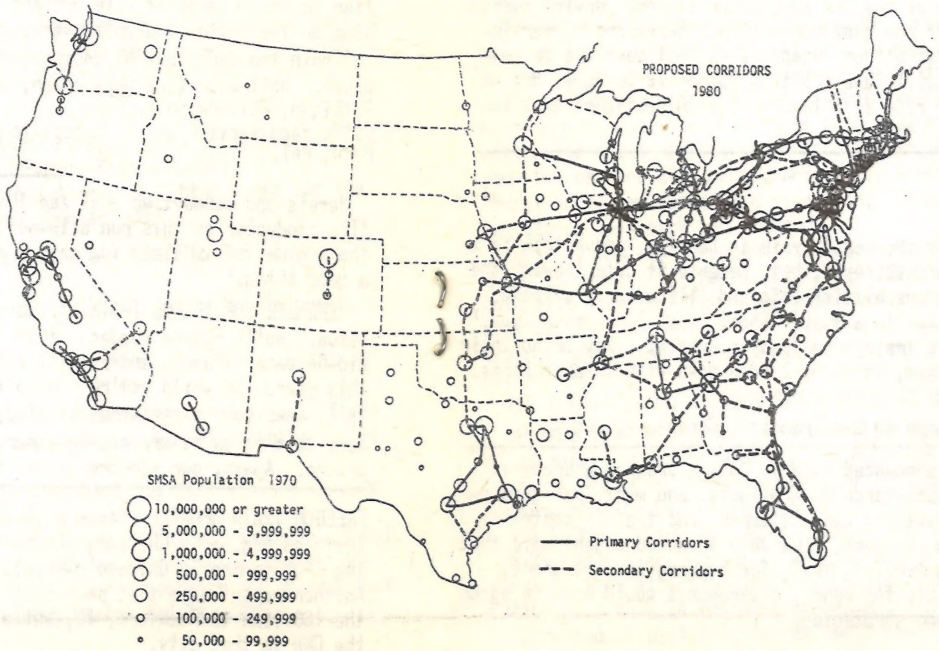
This question bothered Ronald C. Sheck, Associate Professor of Geography at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces. So he set about devising a plan for Amtrak, which he calls AMTRAK 80--a growth plan that could be implemented by 1980. Says Sheck in the introduction to his 68-page plan, "Amtrak has not developed a long-range plan that lays out where trains will be needed 5, 10, or 15 years from now. Growth has taken place in a haphazard manner with little thought to meeting overall national, regional, and local transportation needs. Before a new route is added, its effect on the total system must be analyzed. The same examination should be made to determine where additional trains, on existing routes, are needed."

Sheck, concerned that routes added to the Amtrak system, or proposed to be added, have represented "fragmented and segmented" requests. While it is clear that the system is going to grow, the question is, according to Sheck, "whether it will grow towards some ultimate goal of providing links between cities of certain traffic-generation potential or whether growth will follow a patch-and-plug method responding to the cries of the loudest local supporters or of the most powerful politicians."

The AMTRAK 80 plan, which took 18 months of work on Prof. Sheck's part, envisions an expanded network of about 51,000 route miles (see top map), with the present non-Amtrak routes incorporated in it. The network has the following features: (1) it serves as many Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) as possible (an SMSA is a Census term for urban areas of at least 50,000); (2) no new track need be constructed, except for terminal connections, and all existing track is assumed available to Amtrak; (3) Amtrak runs all passenger trains except those of Auto-Train Corporation; (4) alternate choices of destinations are maximized from all SMSAs; and (5) parallel routes are minimized.



Proposed and present routes with passenger train service. Includes shifts in certain present routes. All intercity trains to be operated by Amtrak except for auto ferry trains run by Auto Train Corporation.



With 700 locomotives, 5000 passenger cars, and 120 Turbo-sets operating on this network, Amtrak would, says Sheck, serve a larger share of the American population than did the private railroads in 1950 when they used several times as many cars and locomotives on a network twice as long. Thus the network is an economical one, tho it is expensive to build up. However, the nation would benefit from significant energy savings as trains capture a larger share of the intercity travel market, Sheck points out.

This economy is not the only highlight of the plan: trains would offer a quality of comfort, speed and safety heretofore unattained, and they would run frequently to places people most want to reach. Connections to urban transit systems and buslines--intermeshing of modes--is a positive feature of the plan.

The lower map shows primary and secondary corridors in the proposed network. The author suggests placing primary emphasis on such short-distance routes with multiple services. ("Many of the routes currently designated by Amtrak as long-distance ones should be reexamined as a series of end-to-end short and medium haul corridors. While long distance services are essential and must be retained, they are not where the greatest demand lies. The great potential in short haul markets must be developed.")

Thus the 1980 system has 20% of its mileage devoted to primary corridors, and somewhat less to secondary corridors. On the former, at least three daytime trains daily in each direction are proposed, with up to hourly and half-hourly frequencies on some. These corridors connect the larger cities, and track improvements are recommended to allow 70mph average speeds, with up to 90 in the Northeast Corridor.

The plan makes many specific recommendations about track upgrading, rail equipment, implementation, costs ($7.4 billion overall), etc. Copies of the plan are available at cost ($2.75) from the author at 1840 Regal Ridge, Las Cruces, NM 88001.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE AMFLEET CARS

by Ken Maylath

When four of Amtrak's new Amfleet cars made a two-day stand on track 2 of Baltimore's Amtrak station, needless to say, I went for a look. It was past a literature table at the top of the stairway and down to the vintage brick-surfaced platform which formed a contrast to the gleaming cars just out of Budd's Philadelphia plant. And just out is an apt expression, for one of the cars in particular. When public display of the equipment got underway in Boston, three 84-seat coaches plus generator car formed the consist, as outlined in the First July RTN. By the time the cars reached Baltimore, #20000 had been added--that number no doubt indicating the first in the series of Amcafe cars.

There's no escaping the resemblance to Metroliners--inside as well as out. The seats, carpeting, baggage racks are all quite similar. Legroom isn't especially generous--tho probably quite adequate for most people. Lack of footrests (as in the Metros) could be a slight annoyance on longer trips. Of course the long distance versions won't have that problem.

The food service area is at the center of the car--again as in Metroliners, but there are some definite differences. There is no counter along the side of the car opposite the serving area. The serving counter itself is longer and better equipped than in the Metros. Included are a couple of microwave ovens for preparation of hot food, and even a cash register. The fold-down tables at each seat should make eating and drinking a more convenient proposition than in Metroliners. The trays, by the way, slide back and forth several inches as well as folding down.

Others who were looking around at the time of my visit seemed impressed. I spoke with one man who seemed surprised that the price tag for the cars isn't even higher than the considerable amount being spent.

Soon it was time to descend back to that brick platform, pass another literature table and a couple of display panels and head up an escalator to the waiting room. I did so anxious to take my first ride as the new cars enter revenue service during August. And I couldn't help but wonder how many non-business travelers in particular might forsake the higher-priced Metroliners when the Amfleet cars are in general service by late in the year. It will take a little longer to be sure, but they'll no doubt be getting a smoother ride at a lower price in equipment that is every bit as pleasant inside.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"The James Whitcomb Riley is probably the worst train in America, and Amtrak is a disaster. Not only is the train old and decrepit, but, because it cuts through the hills of Virginia and West Virginia before hitting Ohio and Illinois, it's loaded with hillbillies who won't lay out a dime in a tip. 'Shoot, jes' look around you,' mumbled Joe, a waiter. 'Nobody on this train buys food or drinks. They bring their own. By the time this train hits Chicago, it'll be loaded down with chicken bones. We call it the Chicken Bone Express.'"

--Bella Stumbo in San Francisco Chronicle, Aug. 2

CANADIAN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT in Ottawa announced late in July a program whereby it will provide $100 million in capital assistance to provincial and municipal governments to buy commuter rail vehicles, stations and platforms, and traffic control equipment to help fight transportation problems. The July 30 announcement said that the funds would be available beginning April 1, 1977, for 5 years on part grant, part loan basis. In order to be eligible for money, governments would have to agree to satisfactory overall urban management strategies.

One Day of a Rail Watcher

by Robert J. Swan

Wherein the writer shows that not everything in Los Angeles moves on freeways

SATURDAY, JULY 26, 1975. LONG BEACH: Bob joins Wayne in his Mercedes-Benz. VIA LONG BEACH/SANTA ANA/SANTA MONICA FREEWAYS.

LOS ANGELES: Breakfast at The Original Pantry: hotcakes, ham, spuds, joe, eggs. 8:36am: observe southbd SAN DIEGAN at Macy St., humming along the riverbank curves, colorful A and B units. A toot, as well as a wave, from the hoghead. Park at Union Station. No national timetables available. Courtesy greetings exchanged with plank-owning veteran stationmaster K.T. Bradley. Proceed to "railfan's paradise," with gusto thru "grand canyon"--a labyrinth of puddles and potholes. Why the gusto? SOUTHWEST LIMITED is sighted at about 8:55. Neighboring railfan indicates train is flagged thru interlocking by towerman. Train creeps by majestically, coming to a stop precisely o.t. at 9:05am. SAN DIEGAN with A and B units arrives o.t. at 9:35.

VIA PASADENA FREEWAY, FAIR OAKS, COLORADO TO GREAT INTERCHANGE.

PASADENA: Long Beach Fwy southbd, and Foothill Fwy eastbd under construction, while traffic proceeds on Ventura Fwy westbd and Foothill Fwy northbd. Observe HQ of Parsons, a great harbor engineering firm whose local payroll is over 2000. To junction of Foothill Fwy eastbd and Amtrak Santa Fe line. Ties and rail in. Where? In bottom of depressed median. In tunnel box under one-half of freeway, exiting therefrom and rising to grade to be soon physically joined to old line just north of Pasadena's Colorado Blvd. of the rose parades: on each New Year's Day the parade goers are treated to the arriving passenger liner crossing Colorado Blvd.

To Amtrak Santa Fe station. Observe adjacent rail depot restaurant complex of freight cars, steam pig; elaborate setup. To easterly end of town, to where present Amtrak Santa Fe line enters completed freeway median. Complexities of train ramp, tunnel, as-yet-unused auto tunnel observed.

VIA FOOTHILL/SAN DIMAS/CORONA FWYS.

POMONA: Park at transportation center. Endless eastbd Union Pacific freight speeds by. In depot, notice indicates that Amtrak wicket is open, for example, 8:30-9:30pm; no checked baggage. Observe famous pacesetting downtown mall but a short block from transportation center. Nobody. Unbelieveable. 10¢-tram comes along. We pay a roundtrip fare apiece, riding to both ends of line, discussing the mall with tram operator and businessman-type friend. Their theories were: construction of regional shopping centers all around, originally a parking charge here, later lifted; but "harassment" had worked its diversion. Inevitable uncontrollable vandalism from having stores open back and front.

NORTH POMONA: Up Garey Ave. to Amtrak Santa Fe station. This and the Pasadena stations "remodeled" as Amtrak stations. Clean, bright, much blue, seats, functional, both with timetable racks where all skeds available. This one set up to handle an enormous volume--which it is not doing. Agent says he's seen one "Pacific Electric" train - engine picking up empties - on the parallel SP track in the year he's worked his relief job.

VIA ARROW HIGHWAY - ENTER SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY.

UPLAND: Talk to RTD bus driver at line terminus. Inquire about other company's connecting service to San Bernardino. Santa Fe Alta Loma branch apparently at least partly removed. observe rail in Euclid Ave. median.

VIA EUCLID AVENUE, SAN BERNARDINO FREEWAY, MILLIKEN.

MIRA LOMA: Space Center - "We have instant space for you" or words to that effect on billboard. Just across street, along Pattor Rd., talk to Amtrak junk dealer, a private entrepeneur. He directed us east to Etiwanda Ave., south, into main gate

where we are waved in. Portions are leased to various concerns, among them, Rohr's rail division. Many Amtrak ex-Army kitchen cars on sidings, as well as UP cabooses. Rail division is fenced. Talk to guard, and then to an official-type who joins us. If I remember correctly, now they are working 4 days/wk, 8 hrs/day. They will be stepping this up to 10 hrs/day. Say their output is of high quality. I forget whether quantity is 3 or 8 cars/month. They do a thorough strip-down job. Say a Rohr vice president will buy rail division and run it himself, continuing to work on Amtrak cars.

NORTH ON ETIWANDA. EAST ON SAN BERNARDINO FREEWAY, PAST KAISER SPUR, EXITING ON CEDAR AVENUE.

BLOOMINGTON: Southern Pacific Colton Yard. Observe humping from ground. Enter tower. Chat with crew members purchasing from 1st floor vending machines. Up to 3rd floor. Look into and watch control tower operations. Each final retarder serves 8 tracks. Operation apparently works flawlessly. Yard landscaping and concern for esthetics are pleasant surprises.

VIA SLOVER AVE., ALONG SOUTH BORDER OF COLTON YARD, INTO RIALTO CITY LIMITS, A BIT OF COLTON, & BEYOND BACK INTO COUNTY TERRITORY AT SLOVER MTN. CEMENT PLANT.

COUNTY: Observe great junction of El Paso line and Palmdale cutoff, elevated in a great wye. Also observed great ground level reversing loop.

VIA PEPPER AVE., VALLEY BLVD., MERIDIAN AVE.

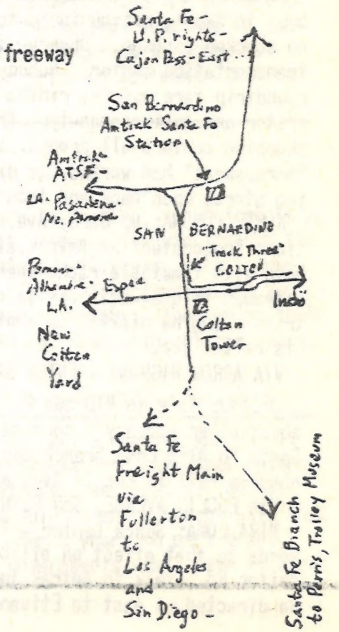
SAN BERNARDINO: Near Meridian Ave., where embankment and elevated Palmdale cutoff throws off the Pacific Electric mainline west, with the Amtrak Santa Fe line below. Intriguing "El" construction over Rialto Ave. Later Wayne would be seeing, from a distance, a Palmdale mainliner creeping by, its rear ascending the grade from the wye turnout at east end of Colton Yard and its El Paso mainline.

VIA RIALTO AVENUE.

SAN BERNARDINO: Seek to observe old P.E. line now ending into Palmdale line. An unused rail bridge across river, directly parallel to ATSF bridge and Rialto Ave. To Amtrak Santa Fe station. To downtown San Bdno, newly redeveloped. See municipal bus "pit." Get schedule & map. To Rialto and "E," to observe mapped rail diamond, SW-NE half found abandoned, vacated, partly redeveloped. Same for branch NE from a turnout a few blocks east.

VIA MT. VERNON AVE. AND LA CADENA DRIVE.

COLTON: Old stations apparently "abandoned" amidst freeway segments. Find "grand junction" of SP main and Santa Fe-UP main at Colton Tower. We are about a mile east of the Palmdale wye, which is at east end of new Colton Yard. Here at Colton Tower two double-track mains cross, plus assorted other tracks, specifically an SP-ATSF interchange track. Here comes an interchange train. From what I'll call an SP "track three," east of crossing, to what I'll call a Santa Fe "track three," north of crossing. Is this the augury of an Amtrak SUNSET LIMITED turning into the Amtrak Santa Fe for a stop at San Bernardino (short backup into station) and Pomona (North) and Pasadena?



I observe closely. Two hand-thrown switches bring the not-stopping interchange train onto the Santa Fe main a short distance north of tower. Wayne is at crossing observing the distant high movement I mentioned on the Palmdale line. Now we walk back to find where "track three" diverges from SP main. We walk and walk. Back to car. We drive a bit; park. We walk and walk. Past old freight station. Finally we see where mainline jogs. It

was not always thus. Ties are still in place where main was connected to "track three." Now, nearby, a reverse movement is possible. Far in the distant end of this older yard there may be a direct turnout to this "track three" but we saw no point in pursuing it further. "Track three" could easily beconnected to both railroad mains at the tower crossing, interlocked. Believe all the railroad mains here are already bi-directional, by the way, since a SUNSET LIMITED eastbound from Santa Fe could be a bit more complex. While the interchange train was proceeding, a northbd UP drag was waiting. Then a westbd SP drag would be approqching. Trains, trains, trains! While I was searching out end of interchange track, Wayne got the car, now with a flat tire. Query over a half dozen service stations. Finally find a Mobil station that has tire plug.

VIA RIVERSIDE FWY, ESCONDIDO FWY.

PERRIS: Orange Empire Trolley Museum. Observe in motion: L.A. Rwy "F" car, L.A. MTA "P" PCC car, at speed; L.A. Rwy 1100 car; P.E. Rwy Big Red Car, at speed. P.E. freight motor coupled to lounge-obsy-sleeper at speed. Bill Anderson trolley slides. Observe parachutists. Refreshments. Discuss current Red Car route rapid transit proposals with "Timepoints" editor Mac Sebree.

VIA ESCONDIDO FWY, VAN BUREN, RIVERSIDE/LONG BEACH FWYS.

SANTA ANA CANYON (West of Corona): Observe, passed by Santa Fe hotshot.

LONG BEACH: Return at 2:15am. An incredible day.

Rail Canada

CP RAIL'S CANADIAN consists are now at an all-time summer low since the train was introduced in 1955. The consist leaving Vancouver July 26 was 10 cars, down from some 22 operated in the period 1966-70 following demise of sister train DOMINION. The 10-car consist included a bag-dorm; 2 flattop coaches; Skyline coach-coffee shop; diner; 4 sleepers; and the sleeper-dome-observation car. A full 22-car consist was made up approximately as follows: 11 sleepers, sleeper-dome-obse; 2 diners; 4 coaches; 2 Skyline coffee shop domes; and 2 bag-dorm cars.

CANADIAN NATIONAL FERRY services across Northumberland Strait between New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island were cancelled as Hurricane Blanche slammed into the maritimes the last weekend in July.

POLICE IN AMBLESIDE residential district of West Vancouver B.C. have received complaints about nude sunbathers being visible from the "Royal Hudson" steam train as it returns from its daily excursion to Squamish. One man complained about a young lady some 4 hours after the train got in. "Must have taken him that long to get over the upset," wrote a Vancouver Sun columnist.

VANCOUVER B.C. HYDRO Transit System has purchased the idle trolley coaches of the Calgary system. Some 55 units will join the approximately 300 now at work in B.C.'s largest city. The units sold for $500-1000 apiece. Most will be rehabilitated for another 10 years of service life. The Calgary system suspended use of trolleys in April. The Edmonton system had previously expressed some interest in the units. The Vancouver system bought several from the Saskatoon system during the last two years. Rising patronage has put a strain on all divisions of the large system.

LOADINGS ON THE "Princess Marguerite" between Seattle & Victoria have continued to rise as the summer tourist season progresses. The Aug. 9 sailing from Seattle saw 1800 board. Helpful hint: Sunday has been the lightest day from Seattle, due to the fact that many shops in Victoria are not open that day.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

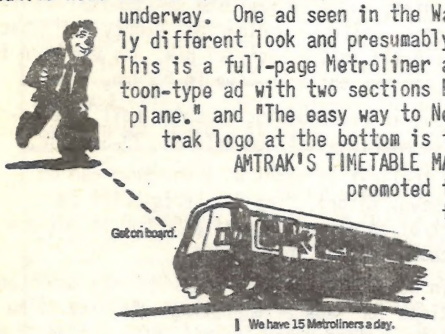
THE RUMOR MILL: Talk going the rounds now is that Amtrak plans to use at least one of its United Aircraft Turbotrains on an Empire Service run..... THE NEW AMCOACHES are supposed to go into service in the Northeast Corridor sometime this month, and railfans have been watching for them on such trains as the MERCHANTS LIMITED, the SENATOR, and the MINUTEMAN. So far they have not appeared. Amtrak said that no date has been set; they have been held up by a shortage of power cars. More than the two currently available are needed..... CLEVELAND OVERWHELMINGLY VOTED on July 22 to take on a 1% sales tax to finance a Regional Transit Authority, largely on the force of promised 25¢ fares (rapid rail and express bus 35¢).....

* * *

THE ORIGINATOR OF the singing radio commercial is said to have publicly apologized to the world for his creation. But sometimes those ditties have something useful and uplifting to communicate--like the current Knudsen Dairy Products commercial in California, which goes in part: "If you've never tasted Knudsen's, then you've never seen the snow-capped Rocky Mountains from the window of the train"..... ANOTHER RAILROAD STRIKE threat is a possibility. The Wall Street Journal says that four railroad craft unions are threatening to walk out Sept 4, altho the strike would likely be delayed at least 2 months by Mediation Board action..... FINAL SYSTEM PLAN of the USRA, in two volumes totalling 920 pages plus errata and maps, was released July 28. And NARP tells us that another unsubsidized commuter line that is in jeopardy (see last issue) is Philadelphia-Wilmington-Newark, Delaware..... THE TURBOLINER RESUMED its Sunday trips between Chicago and Milwaukee on Aug 3. Word was that the problem was not a broken part, but a problem of liability--the Milwaukee Road crew running the train from the shop at Brighton Park to Union Station on ICG and Chicago Union Station tracks with an ICG pilot..... THE HIAWATHA SERVICE is suffering at least half of the coaches with air conditionign problems, comes a report. Snack service in that corridor is provided by a board stretched acrosss a couple of seat backs. And someone found several empty beer cans in the space between the last pair of double seats in the last coach of #325, which was occupied by the crew..... A FREIGHT DERAILMENT in northern Kentucky forced the PANAMA LIMITED to detour in both directions on the Edgewood Cutoff on Aug 8, adding 1½ hours to the running time..... EFFORTS TO OBTAIN single-deck GE commuter cars for ICG service ran into some red tape. The order was to be tacked onto one for SEPTA, but the DOT decided that bids should be solicited, instead of just giving GE the order..... CHICAGO'S RTA PROPOSED to pay $19 million to buy service from 8 area commuter railroads, while the roads want $60 million. There's a good bit of distance in their bargaining at this point..... NORFOLK AND WESTERN is negotiating with PC and ICG for trackage rights to run commuter trains from Orland Park into Chicago's Union Station instead of into Dearborn Station.....

* * *

PAUL REISTRUP-WATCHING: RTN's spies are behind every pillar, taking notes. Amtrak president Reistrup was spotted by our forces in Sandpoint, Idaho, detraining from the westbound NORTH COAST HIAWATHA on Aug 6, accompanied by his son and two assistants. The consist of his train was engines 563 & 561; cars 1205, 6805, 4525, 9463, 4536, 9811 "Silver Lounge", 8094, 2655 "Silver Valley", 2202 "Silver Thrush." After his 9:40 (approx) arrival, he waited for the 12:10am departure of the eastbound EMPIRE BUILDER, spending about 2 hours at Edgewater Lodge on the beach of Lake Pend Oreille, adjoining the depot. His departing train, which double-stopped for him to get into the sleepers, was made up of engines 532 & 539; cars 1088, 1086, 1555, 4533, 9472, 4891, 4881, 4543, dome (no identification showing; probably "Mountain View"), 8047, 2641 "Pacific Waters," NP 377, 2661 "Silver Plain." His assistants waited till his train left and then departed. The usual slumbercoach was missing from this consist; should have been behind 1555, where 4533 was cut in. Incidentally, the Idaho Highway Dept. is planning a "bypass" which would take out the BN depot and the Lakeside Motel, among other things. But the Dept. is stymied because the depot is now a registered historical landmark..... THE ALASKA RAILROAD accident of July 6, described here in the First July Issue, resulted in the totalling of one ex-UP dome coach, which was on the rear of the train struck by the freight.. LOS ANGELES TIMES has come up with another vitriolic, pointless, negativistic article about Amtrak. This long, 2-part narrative by Bella Stumbo (pseudonym?) was reprinted by the San Francisco Chronicle Aug 2 & 4, from where we quote it (see QUOTES, p. 12), on two days when the news was very light and it could find nothing better to fill its pages. What the Bay Area lacks is a decent newspaper. You have to read the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal to get any kind of authoritative news out here..... AMTRAK'S NEW ADVERTISING campaign seems to be getting underway. One ad seen in the Washington Post (Aug 5) has a distinctively different look and presumably is a product of its new ad agency. This is a full-page Metroliner ad (see portion at left), and is a cartoon-type ad with two sections headed "The hard way to New York. By plane." and "The easy way to New York. By Metroliner." Under the Amtrak logo at the bottom is the phrase, "Easy come, easy go".....



AMTRAK'S TIMETABLE MAN since February of 1972 has been promoted to Planning Coordinator in the Office of the President. Bruce Heard will coordinate major projects involving inter-departmental efforts. His assistant, Alexander H. Jordan, is taking over as Chief of Timetables..... LATE IN JULY the Senate approved a proposal by Senator J. Glenn Beall Jr. of Maryland to appropriate $3 million in DOT funds to build a railroad station at Baltimore-Washington International Airport. The bill goes to the House now..... PASSENGERS ON AMTRAK'S SILVER STAR southbd at Richmond, VA on Aug 2 detrained and refused to return because of 95° heat when air conditioning broke down in 5 cars. The train waited almost an hour while passengers were persuaded to return, but several took Amtrak's offer of free lodging and passage on the next day's train..... INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION ruled on July 30 that Amtrak must pay certain costs of running Washington Union Station that it had contested..... BICENTENNIAL COLONIAL CORRIDOR special tickets, to go on sale Sept 8, were announced by Amtrak Aug 6. They will contain no restrictions on holiday travel, contrary to an earlier announcement, but will not be good for travel starting between 1 & 8pm on Fridays and Sundays. The time limit was also lengthened from 21 days to one month from date of first use..... DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME will continue to occur between March and October for 2 more years, if Congress passes legislation suggested by the DOT Secretary July 31..... ASAPH H. HALL was sworn in on Aug 6 as Federal Railroad Administrator. He was acting Administrator before that, replacing John W. Ingram who took over as head of Rock Island Lines.....

* * *

AMTRAK HAS MOVED OUT of the BN depot in Omaha, and the station is boarded up. The new station facility is a mobile one just east of the old depot. The station is open 10:30pm to 5am to serve the SFZ. Observers found the facility attractive, clean and functional. The station is, however, very difficult to find. Union Station has reopened as the Continental Trailways station..... BENSON, ARIZONA BECOMES a flag stop for the SUNSET LIMITED on Oct. 26..... OREGON DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION holds hearings Aug 13-20 on plans for intercity transportation in the Willamette Valley. One consideration is another Eugene-Portland Amtrak train..... THE MICHIGAN EXECUTIVE has some changes: train 373 will run Chicago-Detroit Fridays only; 374 runs Chicago-Jackson, MI Sundays only. The extension is to relieve overcrowded conditions on the Turbos on Friday evenings. No startup date is known. A recent train consist (8/4) is: E unit 328; NYC coach 3623; Amtrak 6433 & 6415...

Urban-Suburban Transit

THREE TRAINS COLLIDED in a tunnel on the Red Line of Boston's MBTA at evening rush hour Aug. 1. Injured were 133 people, only 8 of which were held in hospitals. No fatalities occurred. Preliminary investigation pointed to a malfunctioning signal near Charles station, that might have been disturbed by 98° heat.

THE DOT'S UMTA got a replacement for Administrator Frank Herringer, in the form of Robert E. Patricelli. The swearing in took place Aug. 6, after an Aug. 1 Senate confirmation. Patricelli comes from two Hartford, CT business-sponsored nonprofit community planning and development companies, where he was vice president. Previously he served as Deputy Under-Secretary of Policy Coordination, Deputy Ass't Sec'y for Planning & Evaluation and as Special Ass't to the Sec'y of HEW. He was born in Hartford Dec. 9, 1939. He and his wife and two children live in McLean, VA.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION of New Jersey is recommending commuter rail fare increases of 15-43%, averaging 25%. Public hearings will be held Aug 25-Sept 16.

DETROIT HAS PURCHASED three 75-year-old trolleys to start up a downtown run on Washington Blvd, as part of an urban renewal effort. The St. Louis-built cars, obtained from Lisbon, Portugal, are part of an expenditure of $600,000 to build a small, nucleus streetcar system to attract visitors to the area.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY in New York will hold hearings this month on proposed fare increases and on applications for federal operating subsidies. The hearings cover increases on the MTA, Staten Island Rapid Transit, PC's Hudson, Harlem & New Haven lines, and the Long Island Rail Road.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY is being sued by two laid-off managers of its Transportation Systems division, reports the Wall Street Journal, who charge that the company is trying to get out of the mass transit field. Ford denied the charge.

Express Ads

Need members to organize B'ham Committee for additional Amtrak Service. Needed: Service B'ham-Atlanta, Birmingham Memphis & Chattanooga, Montgomery-Atlanta, and service to Mobile and New Orleans. Interested? Write: David Wilkinson, 1418 13th Place So., Birmingham, Alabama 35205.

When in Kansas City, visit the KC RR Museum at 3rd & Broadway in fascinating River Quay. Psgr & Frt cars; gift shop. Sat & Sun 1-5pm. Phone: (816)GR1-9321.

Amtrak Circle fares are back eff. Sept 16. $228.00 takes you from West Coast to New Orleans, Chicago and Seattle. Combine them with excursion fares to Florida, Washington DC, Boston or Norfolk. Ask about various routings available. Reserve now through Let's Travel, P O Box 2768, Riverside CA 92506. Phone 714-787-8350. An Amtrak Authorized Agent that CAN "Train Talk" with you.

FOR SALE: R&LHS bulletins #76 thru 106 except #79-104-105 sold single or lot best offer by October 1st. Also Pennsylvania form 1 system timetable Sept 8, 1957 $2.25, L&N System June 23, 1957 $1.50 and Monon Sept 29, 1957 $1.25 includes first class postage. Ed Von Nordeck, P O Box 2768, Riverside CA 92506.

SALT LAKE CITY: Don't breathe, says the public transit catalyst, until San Francisco ZEPHYR goes Ogden - Reno VIA SALT LAKE CITY.

SUBSCRIBE TO RAIL TRAVEL NEWS: Just $8 per year for 24 twice-monthly issues delivered by first class mail. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

DRAWING ROOMS ON AMTRAK! It's possible, on occasion, to travel in drawing room luxury at bedroom prices. For full information, contact "the train people" at GREAT WESTERN TOURS, Sheraton-Palace Hotel, 9th Floor, San Francisco 94105, or call us at (415) 398-2994. And of course moneysaving "family plan" applies!

AMTRAK LAW: New unofficial edition with all the latest amendments, $6. Edited by Robert J. Swan, Box 1866, Long Beach CA 90811.

Rock Island, Burlington Route, Southern and Ann Arbor Uniform Buttons 60¢ each or all four $2.25. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

If you are interested in P.C., L.V., PRSL and other P.C. controlled lines, then P.C. Railfan Magazine is for you. Subscription rate is $12.00 for 6 issues. Contact Jerome A. Rosenfeld, 133 Dullas Dr., Dumont NJ 07628.

Hey, Paul: What's the largest U.S. city without trains? A hint: service was promised in June 74. Over a year later & still waiting. (signed) Moses CLEVELAND.

FOR SALE: "The Electric Railway" by A.M. Buck. 1915 text on traction design, cars, track, power, signals, etc. $10 ppd. Braem, 4086 Cody, S.Oaks CA 91403.

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN against yellow worms on our pies. E. Harry Beltzig was right! (see last issue, p.5). No more squirt-can cheddar cheese on our desserts--in rail diners or ANYWHERE. Check the Yellow (pardon the expression) Pages for your local chapter of SYCAMORE (Squirting Yellow Canned Annelids Makes One Retch Easily).

WHEN YOU WANT YOUR MESSAGE to get out in a hurry, RTN's Express Ads are the way to go. The cost is only 50¢ per line of 80 spaces. And here's good news for display advertisers: we can once again offer you full-page ad space, at only $25 per page (size 5x8 inches). Rear cover, when available, is $25 for 5x6 space. Smaller display ad sizes are priced in proportion. Write: RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Ad Dept., Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

"AMTRAK BLUES" NEWSLETTER
Read Management Scandals, Passenger's Stories and more.
$1.50 per copy
Printed by the workers of Amtrak. Send check or money order to:
"Amtrak Blues" fund
610-6 San Gabriel Ave.
Albany, Calif. 94706

Order now!

RTN's Rail Travel Yearbook will soon be off the press. The printing is limited, so to be assured of getting yours and getting it early, send your order now. The Rail Travel Yearbook 1975 is priced at $3.50 each. It is to be an 8½x11 softbound book of at least 50 pages, filled with interesting and entertaining features, including the most complete exposition of RTN's first reader train rating survey. See the more detailed description in the last issue of RTN. Send the coupon or use a separate sheet. Californians add 21¢ or 23¢ (BART counties) tax.

TO: MESSAGE MEDIA, BOX 9007, BERKELEY CA 94709

Send me ____ copies of RTN's Rail Travel Yearbook 1975 as soon as it's published. Amount enclosed:_____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____